(Attachment C.)



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

July 23, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Floreen President of Montgomery County Council 100 Maryland Avenue Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Floreen:

Re: Proposed Changes to COMAR Regulations by the Maryland Department of the Environment

On behalf of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), we respectfully request that Montgomery County Government transmit written comments to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) surrounding the continued use of septic easements because the MDE is proposing new COMAR regulations that will prohibit the use of septic easements.

The AAC understands there have been discussions between Executive and Council staff to send a joint letter signed by the County Council and County Executive to the Attorney General requesting a legal opinion for using septic easements in Montgomery County. These discussions resulted from MC 11-10 /House Bill 1506 which failed during the 2010 session and proposed continued use septic easements in the rural and agricultural zones of Montgomery County. The AAC also recommends this joint letter being sent to the Attorney General to include a request the continued use of septic easements in the rural and agricultural zones of Montgomery County.

The AAC has reviewed the Maryland Department of the Environment proposed changes to the COMAR regulations for approving individual septic disposal systems. The MDE is requesting written comments by the deadline of August 18, 2010. The AAC is very concerned that the MDE is proposing to prohibit the continued use of septic easements and this will negatively impact our farmland preservation policies and programs throughout the rural and agricultural zones.

The continued use of septic easements in the rural and agricultural zones will provide property owners with a valuable tool to reduce the size of future residential lots and thereby reduce the fragmentation of remaining farmland. Prohibiting the use of septic easements will place a hardship on the owners of properties that are enrolled in our County and State agricultural preservation easement programs. Under these current programs, landowners can only request residential lots for the immediate family members on 1 acre maximum sized lots. The proposed MDE COMAR regulations will force these landowners to locate the proposed house, well, septic absorption system and all the required set back distances within the 1 acre lot itself. Achieving

(Attachment C.)

these requirements will likely prove to be impossible to meet in rural and agricultural zones of Montgomery County where we have numerous soil drainage constraints.

The continued use of septic easements is also important in light of the proposed Zoning Text Amendments that were approved by the Planning Board on March 18, 2010 and transmitted to the County Council for introduction. These Zoning Text Amendments propose new lot standards for a maximum lot size of 3 acres for all residential development in the RDT zone. The prohibition for septic easements may create an environment where the 3 acre maximum lot size cannot meet all of the development regulations of the County and this outcome would represent a reduction of land equity and property rights.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide the views of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee on the proposed changes to the COMAR regulations surrounding the use of septic easements. We encourage you for the reasons outlined above to submit a joint letter to the Attorney General requesting a favorable legal opinion for approving septic easements and also provide the written comments to the MDE requesting that the rural and agricultural zones of Montgomery County should be exempt from the prohibition of septic easements.

Sincerely,

David Weitzer, Chairman

David Weitzer, suc

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee

Cc: The Honorable Isiah Leggett, County Executive



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Isiah Leggett

County Executive

Timothy L. Firestine Chief Administrative Officer

August 18, 2010

Mr. Jay Prager, Deputy Program Manager Wastewater Permits Program Maryland Department of the Environment Montgomery Park Business Center 1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 455 Baltimore, Maryland 21230-1708

Dear Mr. Prager:

Please accept this letter as the written comments on behalf of Montgomery County Government in opposition to the updated COMAR regulations. It is our understanding that you are seeking stakeholder feedback prior to formally publishing the amended regulations. Specifically, we are opposed to the proposed changes to COMAR 26.04.03 surrounding the updated definition of Minimum Ownership.

The State regulation is COMAR 26.04.03. The section entitled "minimum ownership" currently states that: "For each dwelling unit a minimum area of 10,000 square feet exclusive of buildings, easements, right-of-ways, and other permanent physical objects, shall be provided for the subsurface disposal of sewage."

The proposed regulation for COMAR 26.04.03 states that (1) for each dwelling unit a minimum area of 10,000 square feet, or sufficient area for the installation of an initial system plus two complete replacements, whichever is greater, shall be provided on the proposed lot for the disposal of sewage. This area must be exclusive of buildings, easements, rights-of-way, and other permanent or physical objects.

The proposed State regulation will prohibit the use of septic easements that Montgomery County has used successfully for over 40 years. The primary purpose of our comments will focus on the benefits that septic easements have provided to encourage the County efforts to preserve farmland in the County's RDT (Rural Density Transfer) and Rural zones. We are opposed to the MDE proposal that will prohibit Montgomery County from continuing the current practice of authorizing septic easements in our RDT and Rural zones.

For several decades, Montgomery County has allowed the use of "off-lot" sewage disposal easements to be used in the subdivision of land. In those cases where the developer is not able to provide a suitable sewage disposal area on the proposed lot a septic easement area is provided on a contiguous property. This "septic easement" is depicted on the record plat.

Mr. Jay Prager August 18, 2010 Page 2

With the current efforts to maximize the preservation of farmland in the RDT and Rural zones, these septic easements have become an important tool to keep the size of the new lots as small as possible, while providing a suitable sewage disposal area on the remainder of the farm in the RDT and Rural zones. Furthermore, the use of septic easements has enabled the County to locate the septic system where the soils are more acceptable and then locate the proposed dwelling where it will not negatively impact the agricultural operation. As currently proposed, the COMAR regulations may locate the new dwellings in the middle of farm fields where the soils are more suitable for septic absorption systems. Montgomery County is working hard to reduce the fragmentation of farmland through the use of numerous tools including septic easements and cluster zoning. Pursuant to the easement for the septic field the owner of the benefitted parcel retains the responsibility and liability for proper installation, maintenance and usage of the septic easement. Other uses are not permitted within the septic easement. A copy of a sample easement is attached.

The use of septic easements also helps to reduce the size of the proposed lot thereby keeping a majority of the remaining farmland intact. As currently proposed, the COMAR regulations will require the size of new lots to increase so that the lot encompasses the building footprint, the well, the septic absorption system and all of the required development regulations set backs.

The proposed language of COMAR 26.04.03 will create hardships for those individuals that have enrolled their farms into the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF). Under the MALPF program proposed lots are limited to only one acre in size and no more than two acres only if constraints exist for locating a septic absorption system. In Montgomery County, our experience has shown that 3 acre sized lots are usually needed to achieve all of the development regulations in the RDT and Rural zones. The application of septic easements represents a useful tool to help landowners meet the requirements of the MALPF program and not be denied their vested property rights.

The proposed language of COMAR 26.04.03 will create challenges for Montgomery County within our Agricultural Reserve where we are recognized nationally for our farmland preservation efforts. Montgomery County has the highest percentage of farmland protected by agricultural preservation easements and more than any other county in the USA.

There is no tangible harm that has been identified that would be addressed by the proposed COMAR regulations and the proposed change would pose a very real impediment to local efforts to preserve farmland. For these reasons we oppose this change.

Mr. Jay Prager August 18, 2010 Page 3

County regulations have eliminated septic easements in residential areas of the Cour however, as indicated above, the narrow application of septic easements is beneficial for the Rural Density Transfer RDT zone and Rural zones.

We hope to work closely with the State of Maryland in the future on this matter of septic easements.

Sincerely,

Diane Schwartz Jones

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer

Cc: Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Nancy Floreen, Council President
Mike Knapp, Chair PHED
Tim Firestine, CAO
Steve Silverman, Director, DED
Carla Reid, Director DPS

(Attachment ⊆.) APPARENT LANE
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INVESTIGATE

OF DEDICATOR

TO DEDICATOR

THE SERVICE STATE

THE SERVICE ST S.E. HUNTER L 18954 F. 362

n, the property shown hereon is subject to the regulieration of the monoperation. Doubity forest conservation law including approval of a fighl conservation. "Law and appropriate agreements prior to issuance of a sediment control permit."

NOTES

HAS PLAT IS NOT INTENDED TO SHOW EVERY MATTER AFFECTING OR RESTRICTING THE NECKSHIP AND USE OF THE PROPERTY. THIS PLAT IS NOT INTENDED TO REPLACE AN WAINATION OF TITLE OR TO DEPICT OR NOTE ALL MATTERS AFFECTING TITLE.

SEPTIC FIELD BUILDING RESTRICTION LINE SUBJECT TO CHANGE UPON REAPPROVAL BY THE ONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES WELL AND SEPTIC SECTION. PROPERTY FOUND ON MONTGOMERY COUNTY TAX MAP BS. W.S.S.C. SHEET 222NW21

LOT 1 APPROVED FOR 4 BEDROOM HOUSE

.264 Acres

LOT 1 IS REING CREATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONA 63-63-6(N)(8) OF THE BISHTGOMERY UNIHTY SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS: THES PLAT CONFORUS TO PREPRELIBINARY PLAN NO. 0070-100 THESP THATER FLANK . "APPROVED LAFEL 14, 2008.

), THE PROPERTY SHOWM HEREON IS SUBJECT TO AN EASEMENT FOR SEPTIC SYSTEM RECORDED MONG THE LAND RECORDS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND IN LIBER 35581 AT FOLIO 178

14. THE PROPERTY SHOWN HEREON IS SUBJECT TO AN EASEMENT FOR WELLS RECORDED AMONG THE LAND RECORDS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND IN LIBER 35681 AT FOUR 172

2 THIS LOT IS SUBJECT TO A DECLARATION OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANT/EASEMENT RELATING TO ENSITY FROM THE PARIENT PARCEL RECORDED IN LIBER 35838 AT FOUID 352

13. ONE TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHT (TDR) REMAINS AVAILABLE FOR THE CREATION OF THE SINGLE FAMILY LOT SHOWN HEREON.

14. ALLHUTT LANE IS MAINTANED BY MONTCOMERY COUNTY. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ALLAHIT MAE AS A PUBLIC BISHT OF WAY COULD NOT BE FOUND AMONG THE LAND RECORDS OF MONTCOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

1S. THE PLOODELAIN GHOWN HERE ON IS AN ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF THE FLOODELAIN STUDY, APPLICATION NO 2327AT, PERFORMED BY AN SCHOOLEDING ON TED DECLMERER S, 2007 AND APPROVED BY DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES LETTER DATED JANUARY 25, 2008

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S.E. HUNTER . L. 18954 F. 362

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LINE TABLE

M.S.WILLIAMS ET AL TRUST L.19498 F.753

OWNER'S CERTIFICATION

 PROPERTY ZONED NOT AT MATE OF RECORDANTON, ALL EXISTING AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON THIS PROPERTY IS SUBJECT TO THE STANDARDS UNDER THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE. 2.10T TO BE SERVED BY PRIVATE WELL AND PRIVATE SEPTIC SYSTEM. EXISTING SEMER AND WATER CATEGORIES: \$-6, W-6. PLAT NO. 23933

L. 19498 F. 753 DATUM

VICINITY MAP

SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATION

Allout to Sarah Ekzabeth Dorsett dated July 9. 1 Liber 9391 at Folio 552 among the land records Maryland. I further certify that the floodplain sh acres of land of which 4,406 square

Professional Land Surveyor mag



LEGEND

SYSTEM AND SEPTIC AREA

SEPTIC FIELD BRLL

-100. MOIT-BOTTINION LYDING

EASEMENT FOR SEPTIC

_ 1.617 Acres

HUNTER'S FOREST SUBDIVISION RECORD PLAT

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND SCALE 1"= 50' SEPTEMBER 2008

RECEIVED

THOMAS A. MADDOX

PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR
BOSS SHADY GROVE COURT
GAITBERSBURG, MARYLAND 20077
(301) 984-5804

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LAT TOTALS

WASER OF LOTS, OUTLOTS, PARCELS

VEA OF LOTS,OUTLOTS, PARCELS

1284 ACS

VEA OF DEDICATION

1788 ACS

OTAL AREA SHOWN ON PLAT

1288 ACS

PLAT NO.

THE HARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMBISSION ONTGOHISEY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

winder frank thinketh Hunter

APPROVED CHECKMENT 4, 2008

DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

W86.4033-W

Clerk of the Circuit County, Md. Montgomery County, Md. DEC 3 1 2006

(Attach ment ()

DEED OF EASEMENT FOR SHALLOW SEPTIC SYSTEM CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND ACCESS

WITNESSETH

WHEREAS, Hunter is the owner in fee simple of a certain real property containing 82.14 acres, known as Parcel P370 on Tax Map Grid BS63, being the large described in a deed dated July 9, 1990 and recorded in Liber 9391 at folio 552 in the Land Records for Montgomery County, Maryland (hereinafter "Parcel P370").

WHEREAS, Hunter applied to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) to create a single lot from Parcel P370, to be known as Lot One, Hunter's Forest, as shown on pre-application plan number 720070160. The M-NCPPC record plat number for this plan is 2-08163 and the subdivision will be known as Hunter's Forest, Lot 1.

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2008, M-NCPPC, pursuant to Section 50-35A(a)(8) of Chapter 50 of the Montgomery County Code, approved pre-application plan number 720070160 for Lot One, not to exceed 1.27 acres, for 1 one-family detached residential dwelling unit.

WHEREAS, Hunter desires to establish a Shallow Septic System Construction, Maintenance, and Access Easement Area on Parcel P370 for the sole use and benefit of Lot One, Hunter's Forest, as described in Schedule A and shown on Schedule B, (hereinafter the "Construction and Maintenance Easement Area").

THEREFORE, Hunter hereby grants an easement for the benefit of Lot One, Hunter's Forest, for the sole purposes described herein and that Parcel P370 shall be held, sold, and conveyed subject to the following easements, which are for the sole purpose of providing a Shallow Septic System with pipes and appurtenances thereto and participant the same for Lot One, Hunter's Forest, under the following terms and conditions FEE

- 1. The above recitals are incorporated herein as an integral part of the RC Agreement.
- 2. The Easement granted by this instrument is for the perpetual use of Lot One, Hunter's Forest, for the sole purpose set forth herein, and shall be automatically extinguished if and when the residence on Lot One has been connected to any approved public sewer system. The primary use of the Construction and Maintenance Easement Area encumbered by this covenant is for the construction and maintenance of a Shallow

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20.00 20.00 40.00 t \$ 53292 lk \$ 3762

MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT (Land Records) [MSA CE 63-35818] LEK 35861, p. 0178. Printed 08/18/2010. Image available as of: 08/25/2008.

Client Documents: 48/36-2661-78/58/2|19/348-000000|6/16/2008



Septic System, with pipes and appurtenances thereto, to serve the needs of the improvements located on Lot One. If and when the Owners of Lot One shall install the Shallow Septic System, with pipes and appurtenances thereto, they will have the appropriate permits from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) and will comply with the requirements of DPS and any and all other governmental authorities. The Owner of Parcel P370 shall not impede the ability of the Owner of Lot One to use the easement area for the purpose it was created.

- 3. No buildings, surface structures, or trees will be allowed in the Construction and Maintenance Easement Area, set forth on the attached Schedules "A" and "B". The Owners of Parcel P370 shall not grade, compact or alter the existing ground surfaces for any purpose other than normal farming operations
- 4. The Owner of Lot One shall be obligated to remove, protect, and replace such materials when they construct the system within the Construction and Maintenance Easement Area. Upon the completion of the construction or after any maintenance of the system, the Owner of Lot One will restore the land disturbed to the approximate condition it was in prior to the system construction. This will include grading the soil and re-seeding with an appropriate grass variety and any landscaping. These provisions regarding the restoration shall be applicable not only during original construction, but also during future maintenance, replacement, or removal of any equipment related thereto.
- 5. The Owner of Lot One, his heirs, successors, and assigns, shall at all times have the right of ingress and egress to and from said Construction and Maintenance Easement Area for the purpose of construction and maintenance of a Shallow Septic System, with pipes and appurtenances thereto, within the Construction and Maintenance Easement Area.
- 6. The Owner of Lot One and Parcel P370 waive any right to request, demand, or have a jury trial in connection with any dispute or controversy between the parties which in any way relate to or concern this agreement. In the event such disputes or controversies between the Owners concern a total amount claimed by either or both parties in excess of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00), the Owners agree that all such disputes or controversies shall be submitted to mediation through the Montgomery County Bar Association Mediation Program. The Mediator's decision shall be binding and enforceable through a Court Order and the prevailing party shall be entitled to reimbursement for all mediation costs and expenses, including, but not limited to attorneys fees. The award rendered by the mediator shall be final and judgment may be rendered upon it in accordance with applicable laws of any court having jurisdiction thereof. A party is deemed to have prevailed if it obtains a judgment or settlement in its favor which substantially provides for the relief contemplated either in its complaint or responsive pleading.
- The Owner of Lot One shall indemnify, defend and hold the Owner of Parcel P370 harmless from and against any and all claims, liabilities, costs and/or

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damages arising from the Owner of Lot One relating to the Owner of Lot One's their contractors, assigns and successor's entry and/or activities on Parcel P370.

These easements shall run with the Real Property and shall be binding upon and burden all parties having any right, title, or interest in or to Parcel P370, their respective heirs, personal representatives, successors, and assigns.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, The Parties have executed this Deed of Easement by their hand and seal the day and year written above.

STATE OF MARYLAND COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 24 day of June before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public of the State of Maryland, personally appeared SARAH E. HUNTER, being duly authorized, did execute the foregoing instrument for the purposes therein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and official seal.

My Commission expires: ___

I hereby certify that the foregoing Deed of Easement was prepared under my supervision and that I have been duly admitted to practice law by the Court of Appeals of Maryland.

> Rebear O Walker Rebecca D. Walker

Address

Tax ID

P370

21138 Westerly Road, Poolesville, Maryland

03-00033671

Lot One, Hunter's Forest

After recording, return to Miles & Stockbridge P.C. 11 N. Washington Street MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT (Land Records) [MSA CE 63-35818] LEK 35861, Suite 700ed 08/18/2010. Image available

Rockville, MD 20850-4229 3 Attn: Rebecce Walker

4

(Attachment C.)

THOMAS A. MADDOX PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR

Registered to Practice: Maryland Virginia District of Columbia 8933 Shady Grove Court Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (301) 984-5804 (301) 330-0812 FAX(301) 984-6865

Description for a Septic Disposal Easement
over the property of
SARAH E. DORSETT (now SARAH E. HUNTER)
Liber 9391 Folio 1552
Election District No. 3
Montgomery County, Maryland

Part of a tract of land described in a deed from Elizabeth Brown Allnutt to Sarah E. Dorsett dated July 9, 1990 and recorded in Liber 9391 at Folio 1552 and subsequently described by a more recent survey contained in a deed of Conservation Easement from Sarah E. Dorsett also known of record as Sarah E. Hunter to Montgomery County, Maryland dated November 25, 2003 and recorded in Liber 26273 at Folio 572 among the land records of Montgomery County, Maryland and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning for the same at a point at the end of the following two (2) courses and distances from the beginning of the 9th line of the description contained in the aforementioned deed of Conservation Easement recorded Liber 26273 at Folio 572, N30° 47' 10"W - 1306.62 feet; thence departing said 9th line, N40° 04' 04"E - 148.76 feet; thence with the outlines of said Septic Disposal Easement

N40° 04' 04"E for 31.83 feet; thence

S11° 41' 02"E for 31.83 feet; thence

S56° 41' 02"E for 303.90 feet; thence

S11° 41' 02"E for 117.93 feet; thence

S56° 41' 02"E for 404.09 feet; thence

N08° 17' 01"E for 40.13 feet; thence

S84° 22' 07"E for 135.67 feet; thence

S55° 02' 33"E for 144.83 feet; thence

S17° 38' 14"E for 39.90 feet; thence

S60° 01' 09"W for 95.19 feet; thence

S29° 04' 09"W for 89.40 feet; thence

N84° 40' 33"W for 83.76 feet; thence

N53° 28' 10"W for 72.87 feet; thence

N22° 33' 29"W for 36.69 feet; thence

N20° 10' 52"E for 88.28 feet; thence

N21° 09' 26"W for 13.35 feet; thence

N56° 41' 02"W for 449.20 feet; thence

N11° 41' 02"W for 117.93 feet; thence

N56° 41' 02"W for 303.90 feet; thence

N11° 41' 02"W for 22.48 feet, to the point of beginning containing 70,436 square feet or 1.6170 acres.

MONTGOMERY CONNTY CONTROL (Land Records) [MSA CE 63-35818] LEK 35861, p. 0181. Printed 08/18/2010. Image available as of 08/25/2008. SCHEDULE A

